

AN OLD PIONEER  
PASSES AWAY

Dr. W. L. Adams died at his residence on Paradise Farm, Thursday morning, April 26, 1906, of heart failure, aged 85 years, 2 months and 21 days.

The news came as a surprise to the community, as he was not known to be seriously ill and was down town but a few weeks ago. He had been failing, however, for nearly a year having had a partial stroke of paralysis last May, and was taken quite ill last Sunday. Dr. Adams had been called, as he had always prescribed for himself. About five o'clock Thursday morning he got up and dressed, complaining of severe pains, and took a dose of medicine. He then lay down on the couch and fell into a stupor. A physician was called, but he expired before a doctor could reach there, at 5:30 a. m.

The funeral was held Saturday afternoon at the residence of Rev. J. L. Hornum officiating, and the remains laid to rest in Idlewild cemetery. There was a large sized concourse of old residents and neighbors present. The relatives attending from out of town were: Mrs. Julia McLean and Miss Amy Adams, daughters by his first wife; Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Mosier and Miss Dollie Mosier, of Mosier, brother and sister of Mrs. Adams; Mrs. Frank P. Taylor, of the Dalles, step-sister of Mrs. Adams; and Mrs. A. G. Faust, of Portland, an old friend who lived with the family for some time.

The pall bearers were: A. S. Howers, Leslie Butler, L. Henry, D. McDonald, Cyrus Vaughan and S. P. Rythe.

The deceased leaves a wife and two children, Percival and Lenore, by the second marriage, and seven children by the first marriage: Mrs. Lee E. Parker, California; Mrs. Helen E. Johnson, wife of Prof. Johnson, of State University, Eugene; Mrs. Julia McDonald, Portland; Judge W. H. Adams, Dawson, Alaska; Gaines M. Adams, Paterson, Wash.; Annie C. Adams, Portland, Ore.; Mrs. Charles M. Alkin, Astoria, Ore. One son, Mr. Arthur Craig Adams, died at the age of 4 years.

W. L. Adams was born in Palmyra, Ohio, Feb. 5, 1821, his parents having emigrated to that state when it was a wilderness. His father was a devoted friend of Gen. Harrison, with whom he served in all of his Indian campaigns. His mother was a descendant of Ethan Allen, the "Hero of Fenton." Her mother and William Slade's mother were sisters. Slade was governor of Vermont.

In 1838 young Adams started for Galesburg to enter Knox College. He carried with him a cotton handkerchief, wrapped around a cotton shirt, pair of socks and a Greek and Latin grammar, with Day's algebra and one or two other books. He supported himself by teaching school and working in the harvest field. His handkerchief went to Bethany College, Va., warmly received by the president, Alexander Campbell, taken into his house, and trusted for his books and board. Out of \$17 he earned in the harvest field he reached Bethany College with \$20 in money and a cheap suit of clothes. He took the highest honors as a scholar and was called the best writer in the college.

During the college term he studied on an average 17 hours a day. His lessons were mastered, he made it a rule to write some facetious article for a paper at Bethany, for which he generally received a dollar. His fame as a satirist rose high when it leaked out that he was the author of the articles which depicted well-known characters.

In the fall of 1844 he married Frances Olivia Goodell, to whom he had been engaged two years. The two had a joint-stock capital of \$32. Adams stood up to be married in a suit of Kentucky jeans, worn threadbare. His friends ridiculed him for not waiting till he procured fine clothes. He said: "I will marry now and buy my wedding suit when I am able to get it without going in debt." With the \$32 he went to St. Louis, taking deck passage and helping to wood at every wood yard where the steamer stopped.

In the fall of 1845 he took a school in Henderson county, where he taught 15 months, when the common price of teaching was \$10 a month. The neighbors rolled up a log cabin for Adams to live in, and let him have it for rent.

In the winter of 1847, he was offered five years' employment at a good salary to take charge of the university in the city of Jacksonville, Ill., but having made up his mind to emigrate to Oregon, he declined the offer. In March, 1847, he was ready to cross the plains, having paid up all his college debts, and possessing eight yoke of cattle, two wagons, three guns and all the necessary outfit. His father died a few days before he was ready to start, and he concluded to wait another year, in hopes of inducing his father's family to come with him.

In March, 1848, he started, his friends declining to brave the dangers of a country about which they knew so little.

He left Galesburg in March with four yoke of oxen and two yoke of cows hitched to his wagon, and camped every night on the road till he reached St. Joseph, Missouri. He had two children, Inez Eugenia and Helen Elizabeth, the former two years and the latter four months of age. He camped near St. Joseph two weeks to dry his books and clothing, which had become water-soaked in fording rivers in Missouri where the water ran over the top of the wagon-bed. May 24 he crossed the Missouri river, and with a company of forty other wagons, started on the trail for Oregon. They forded all the rivers (except Green river, where there was a ferry), many of which were deep and dangerous. Their way led through bands of hostile Indians, and the company guarded their trains day and night. Their route led over the most daring and dankest spirit in the crowd. He never seemed so cool and happy as when facing danger. Some in the company called him "a regular dare devil."

In crossing Snake river, he came near losing his team and family. De Chutes was the most dangerous stream they forded on the route. It was forded a few hundred yards above its junction with the Columbia. The bottom was full of huge boulders. The water was deep enough to swim the small cattle in the team. The Indians rode in and showed the immigrants how deep it was. The company was afraid to venture. Adams hired the Indians to pilot them over, giving them a shirt for each team in the company. The wagon-beds were propped up nearly to the tops of the standards. Adams volunteered to take the lead. The waters roared over the rocks so as to drown an ordinary voice. In crossing, the water ran near to the tops of the wagon-beds; and the

frightened women covered their heads with bed-clothing and screamed. Here the company met a man from the Willamette valley, who gave them the news of the discovery of the gold mines in California.

Before reaching Barlow's gate, a toll gate at the entrance of the road over the Cascade Mountains by St. Barlow, the company had split up into many squads. Their teams were weak and jaded, and reduced almost to skeletons. The faces of the immigrants were peeled and scaled by the chill of the sage plains. Here lay before them the hardest part of the trip. The rain had rendered the road almost impassable. The whole route was lined with dead horses and cattle lost by immigrants who had gone before. Adams concluded to make the trip across the mountains by himself.

He was ten days making it to Foster's, the first house he had seen in six months. The mud up many mountains was knee deep; and the cattle were barely able to get on with the empty wagon. He and his wife carried the babies and the entire load up several mountains, wading through mud and nearly knee deep, and then went back and drove up the team. On reaching Foster's they camped to rest.

Foster, on learning that he had no money, generously gave him a peck of potatoes and offered him every accommodation for the winter if he would stop there and teach school. Adams did not like the country, and complained to push father on. In Oregon City he was met by friends, who invited his family to dinner, and at night put his cattle in a yard and ordered a load of oats and feed them gratuitously. Being out of money, he borrowed two dollars to pay his baggage over the Willamette river. He swam all the cattle except those which were too weak to swim. When he settled his baggage, he had ten cents left, and lost that through a hole in his pocket during the winter. On reaching Yamhill he traded his wagon for ten wild Spanish cows which ran with a band of four hundred on Burton Prairie. This band of cows with their increase kept him in beef for several years.

In 1852 Adams gained his first great notoriety. He was a strong Whig, while the territory was strongly Democratic. A series of articles written for the Oregonian, signed "Junius," defending the officials and excoriating the Democrats, came from Adams' log cabin in Yamhill, and attracted much attention on account of their ability and pungent sarcasm. These articles were followed by the melodrama entitled, "Treason, Stratagem and Spoils, in five acts, by Breakspear." It was written in rhyme and blank verse, and contained cuts of the leading Democrats who followed Pratt's leadership. This work caused great excitement throughout the territory. Crowds flocked to every postoffice to get a copy and read it, till half the people of Oregon had committed most of it to memory. When Gov. Gaines and the Whig officials learned that Adams was the author of "Junius" and "Breakspear," they conditionally bought the Spectator press and offered it to him as a present. He would accept a Whig paper, offering to give him all the patronage at their disposal. The offer was declined for fear of injuring the Whig paper at Portland.

In the spring of 1849 he concluded to go to the gold mines of California. He had already bought the land claim of Miles Carey for \$800, paying down a coil for \$300 and a smooth rifle for \$50, and giving his note for the balance. Visiting the mines he returned in August with enough gold dust to pay off all his indebtedness. In 1852 he went to Yreka, Cal., to dig more gold, passing through the Range river valley which was infested with savages. He went with eight others, fought their way through and back, returning with a large quantity of gold dust.

His son, Judge W. H. Adams, ex-city attorney for Portland, was born one week before his father started for Yreka. In 1850 Adams was elected probate judge of Yamhill county, beating his competitor, although the county was Democratic by 250. He also was elected state senator in 1856, winning by 13 votes, against a Democratic majority of 100.

In 1855 he bought the Spectator press for \$1,200 and started the Oregon Argus at Oregon City. For about nine years he edited this paper, which took the lead as a Republican journal. As a writer his equal was not to be found on the coast for ability, pungency and audacity. He stamped the state, writing his editorials on his knee, armed with two revolvers and a bowie knife, as the "slaveholders" were everywhere threatening his life. He said: "I never knew what it was to fear a face of clay. All I ask of them is to meet me like a man, and not shoot me in the back." Lincoln, who read the Argus, was his admirer as a writer. In six weeks after Lincoln was inaugurated, he appointed Adams as collector of customs for the district of Oregon. This was the first appointment made by Lincoln in Oregon. He held two commissions from Lincoln and one from Johnson.

In 1857, he resigned his office owing to failing health and moved back to his farm in Yamhill. In 1858 he decided to go to South America for his health and was offered a government office in that country, but declined. He was three months in making the trip from New Orleans to Aspinwall, meeting with many adventures and facing many dangers to numerous mentions. Visiting Peru, Bolivia and Chili, where he remained for several months, he returned to Boston, where he began a series of lectures which he delivered throughout New England on "Oregon and the Pacific Coast." In Boston, as elsewhere, he was highly endorsed as a lecturer by the public press.

In the winter of 1860 he returned to Oregon after nearly two years of travel, and had \$250 left out of \$4,000 he started with.

In 1873 he went to Philadelphia to add to his medical knowledge. He received the degree of A. M. from Christian College, Oregon that of D. D. from the Eclectic Medical College of Pennsylvania, as also the degree of L. L. D. from the American University of Pennsylvania. In addition to these honors he was awarded a handsome gold medal for "eminent attainments in medical science." He practiced medicine in Philadelphia and Boston with marked success, having generally the most prominent people as his patients.

In 1874 he opened a medical office on Portland, which was soon thronged with patients from San Francisco, Oregon and Washington.

In 1876 Mr. Adams moved to Hood River, where he purchased the place where he has resided for thirty years up to the time of his death and which he named "Paradise Farm." He also bought nearly 300 acres on Indian creek and what is now Idlewild Addition, but at the time of his death his only property consisted of Paradise farm, containing 293 acres. This he valued at \$85,000. He practiced medicine during his residence here until

of late years, and devoted his time to the management of his farm.

October 23, 1881, he married M. Sue Mosier, at Walla Walla, Wash., who survives him, and also two children.

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